

5. Descriptions of three rare Species of Flycatchers. By R. BOWDLER SHARPE, F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c., Department of Zoology, British Museum.

[Received March 29, 1884.]

Count Salvadori has recently forwarded for my inspection some very interesting birds collected by the late Marquis Antinori during the Italian Expedition to Shoa.

One of the Flycatchers in the collection is an *Alseonax*, which Count Salvadori considers to be *A. minima* of Heuglin. It is, however, brown instead of grey on the upper surface, and in several points does not agree with Heuglin's description, nor yet with his plate, which, again, differs from his description. The fulvous eyebrow, thighs, and under tail-coverts are all depicted in the plate, although the description does not tally with the figure in this respect; but as these points are strongly marked in the specimen lent me by Count Salvadori, I suppose it must be referred to *A. minima*. I consider the latter to have been so badly described as quite to justify the opinion of Drs. Finsch and Hartlaub that it was probably referable to *Alseonax adusta*. I therefore append an amended description.

#### 1. ALSEONAX MINIMA.

*Muscicapa minuta*, Heugl. Syst. Uebers. p. 31 (1856).

*Muscicapa minima*, Heugl. J. f. O. 1862, p. 301; Finsch & Hartl. Vög. Ostaf. p. 303, note (1870); Heugl. Orn. N.O.-Af. ii. p. 435, Taf. xviii. fig. 1 (1871).

*Muscicapa fuscula*, Finsch, Trans. Z. S. vii. p. 245 (1870).

*Alseonax minima*, Sharpe, Cat. B. Brit. Mus. iv. p. 129, note (1879).

*Adult male* (Sciolalit, Shoa, March 19, 1878; Antinori). General colour above dark brown, slightly washed with ashy on the mantle and back, the rump and upper tail-coverts more rufescent in tinge; lesser wing-coverts like the back; median and greater series dark brown, with rufescent brown margins; bastard-wing and primary-coverts nearly uniform blackish, the paler margins obsolete; quills blackish brown, with scarcely perceptible paler edges, much more distinct on the secondaries; tail-feathers ashy brown, narrowly edged with a fringe of lighter ashy, the outer tail-feathers with a fringe of whitish at the tips; crown of head darker ashy than the back and indistinctly mottled with dusky brown centres to the feathers; base of forehead washed with tawny rufous; ear-coverts brown with a slight rufescent tinge, the shaft-lines paler; eyelid, feathers below the eye, lores, and a distinct superciliary line pale tawny rufous, as also the anterior portion of the cheeks; chin and upper throat dull whitish, slightly washed with rufous; lower throat brown, with a faint rufescent tinge, followed by a patch of dull white on the fore

neck; breast pale rufescent brown, washed with ashy, the centre of the breast rather paler and resembling the abdomen, which is clear creamy buff, deeper and slightly inclining to tawny on the under tail-coverts; sides of body, flanks, and thighs decidedly more tawny rufous; axillaries and under wing-coverts clear tawny rufous; quills dusky below, ashy rufous along the inner web; "bill horn-colour; feet ashy; iris dusky" (*Antinori*). Total length 4.55 inches, culmen 0.4, wing 2.4, tail 1.9, tarsus 0.55.

The second species of which a specimen has been lent to me by Count Salvadori has been, as pointed out to me by him, unaccountably left out of the 'Catalogue of Birds' both by myself and by Mr. Seebohm. It is the *Drymophila abyssinica* of Rüppell, a species placed by Von Heuglin in the genus *Sylvia*, but I consider it, after examination, to be a true *Lioptilus*. I also take the present opportunity to correct another omission in the 'Catalogue,' viz. that of *Parisoma* or *Ægithalopsis galinieri*, a large species which I also refer to *Lioptilus*. The latter genus has therefore at present four species, and the 'Key to the species' will require amendment as follows:—

- a. Under tail-coverts not chestnut; white or ashy or olive.
  - a'. Head differing in colour from the back, which is warm brown; sides of face, throat, and breast slaty grey.
    - a". Crown of head black, contrasting with the back; upper and under mandible yellowish white in skin..... *nigricapillus*, p. 231.
    - b". Crown of head dark slaty grey; under surface of body entirely grey with olive-brown flanks; back warm brown; bill horn-brown in skin, paler on lower mandible ..... *abyssinicus*, p. 231.
  - b'. Head like the back, ashy olive; throat whitish; breast and flanks ashy brown, the abdomen and under tail-coverts white ..... *olivascens*, p. 232.
- b. Under tail-coverts chestnut; head ashy brown like the back; forehead hoary whitish ..... *galinieri*, p. 232.

1. *LIOPTILUS NIGRICAPILLUS* (V.); Sharpe, Cat. B. iv. p. 262.

2. *LIOPTILUS ABYSSINICUS*.

*Drymophila abyssinica*, Rüpp. Neue Wirb. Taf. 40. fig. 2 (1835).

*Curruca abyssinica*, Rüpp. Syst. Uebers. p. 57 (1845).

*Aedon abyssinicus* (Rüpp.); Heugl. Syst. Uebers. p. 25 (1856).

*Sylvia habessinica*, Heugl. Orn. N.O.-Afr. i. p. 313 (1869).

*Adult female* (Sciolalit, Shoa, April 1, 1878; *Antinori*). General colour above warm brown, rather more ruddy on the lower back and rump; lesser wing-coverts rather more tawny rufous than the back; median and greater series dusky brown edged with tawny rufous; bastard-wing lighter and more ashy brown, washed externally with faint rufous; primary-coverts and quills dusky brown, edged with tawny rufous, inclining to ashy grey towards the end of the primaries; the inner secondaries more ashy, edged with the same colour as the back; tail-feathers ashy brown, edged with olive;

entire crown, nape, and hind neck all round dark slaty grey; lores, sides of face, ear-coverts, cheeks, and under surface of body paler slaty grey, much lighter on the centre of the abdomen; sides of body and flanks reddish brown; under tail-coverts light ashy grey, with hoary whitish edgings; axillaries and under wing-coverts ashy white, slightly washed with reddish or tawny buff; quills dusky brown below, ashy fulvous along the inner web; bill bluish, with the culmen and tip blackish horn-colour; feet and claws leaden grey; iris dusky crimson. Total length 5·8 inches, culmen 0·55, wing 2·85, tail 2·6, tarsus 0·9.

3. *LIOPTILUS OLIVASCENS* (Cass.); Sharpe, Cat. B. iv. p. 263.

The original specimen of Cassin's *Parisoma olivascens* came from Gaboon, and I refer with some hesitation an example collected by the late Governor Ussher, in Fautee, to this species. There are various small discrepancies between the specimen in question and Cassin's description, which, however, it is scarcely worth while to go into, as the identity of the Gaboon and Gold-Coast *Lioptili* can only be settled by an actual comparison of specimens from the two localities.

4. *LIOPTILUS GALINIERI*.

*Parisoma galinieri*, Guérin, Rev. Zool. 1843, p. 162; id. in Ferret et Galin. Voy. Abyss. Ois. vol. iii. p. 223, pl. 13 (1847); Gray, Gen. B. i. p. 194 (1847); Bp. Consp. i. p. 256 (1850).

*Parisoma frontale* (nec Heugl.), Rüpp. Syst. Uebers. p. 43, pl. 22 (1845).

*Crateropus melodus*, Heugl. J. f. O. 1862, p. 29.

*Ægithalopsis galinieri*, Heine, J. f. O. 1859, p. 431; Heugl. Orn. N.O.-Afr. i. p. 395 (1869).

*Adult.* General colour above dark ashy olive-brown; wing-coverts like the back, the outer median ones rather clearer ashy; bastard-wing and primary-coverts uniform blackish brown; quills blackish brown, externally edged with ashy brown, paler towards the ends of the primaries; inner secondaries much browner; tail dark brown; head like the back, except on the forehead, which is hoary grey; lores dusky blackish, extending in a line just above the eye; feathers below the latter dusky; eyelid dull whitish; sides of face, ear-coverts, and cheeks dull ashy brown, rather clearer ashy on the breast and abdomen; lower flanks washed with orange-chestnut, like the vent and under tail-coverts; thighs dull ashy, washed with orange-chestnut; under wing-coverts and axillaries dull ashy; quills dusky below, ashy whitish along the edge of the inner web; "bill black, the cutting-edges of the mandibles whitish; orbits bare and of a lilac colour; feet rufescent dusky; iris crimson" (*Heuglin*). Total length 6·7 inches, culmen 0·6, wing 3·45, tail 3·2, tarsus 1·05.

*Spec. in Mus. Brit.*

a. Ad. sk.

Shoa.

Dr. Rüppell [C.].

b. Ad. sk.

Shoa (*Harris*).

India Museum.